



Reemployment assistance for the unemployed

**Informational Booklet For Workers
Who Are Unemployed**

OKLAHOMA EMPLOYMENT SECURITY COMMISSION



OKLAHOMA
Employment Security Commission

Note from the Executive Director

The Oklahoma Employment Security Commission (OESC) is dedicated to helping you become reemployed as quickly as possible. We recognize your goal is to find a rewarding job that suits your unique talents and skills.

Unemployment Insurance benefits provide eligible recipients temporary support to ease the transition from unemployment to your next opportunity in the workforce.

OESC also offers a variety of services to assist with your work search and job attainment, including:

- referrals to jobs
- skill enhancement
- career guidance
- referrals to other supportive and training services

All of this assistance is offered at no cost to you. Let us help you get back to work. Our tailored services are designed to allow job candidates better understand their skills, improve those skills if needed, and find the best job available.

We hope this booklet is a resource for you. It is filled with practical, useful tips and information. We wish you a fruitful job search and are here to help you each step of the way.



Shelley Zumwalt

Quick reference & contact guide

For General Information or to file a claim:

Unemployment Service Center

(405) 525-1500

(405) 962-7524 FAX

Hours of Operation: Mon–Fri 8:00 a.m. – 4:15 p.m.

Home Website:

oklahoma.gov/oesc

File or Check Status of an Unemployment Claim:

ui.ok.gov

Mailing Address

OESC UI Support

PO Box 52006

Oklahoma City, OK 73152-2006

To locate an Oklahoma Works Office Near You

oklahoma.gov/oesc/locations

Oklahoma Works Office Hours:

Mon–Fri 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

To Register and Search for Work

OKJobMatch.com

To Inquire about Direct Deposit, Debit Card, or Missing Payments

(866) 320-8699 Inside the United States Only

goprogram.com

Text Telephone System (TTY/TDD)

To use a text telephone system to file your initial claim for benefits, use the following telephone numbers:

(800) 722-0353 To have calls relayed

(800) 522-8506 Voice Calls

Equal Opportunity Employer/Program

Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities

Contents

2	Note from the Executive Director	16	Issues that may affect your claim
3	Quick reference & contact guide	18	Qualifying for benefits
4	Table of contents	19	How do I receive my payments?
5	Frequently asked questions about unemployment insurance	20	Maintaining your eligibility
7	Services provided by OESC	21	What do I do when I return to work?
7	Services for Veterans	23	What if I don't qualify?
8	Reemployment services	24	Protecting your rights while appealing a determination
10	Training programs	25	Oklahoma Works - American Job Center locations
11	Unemployment insurance fraud	26	Important reminders!
12	Unemployment insurance	27	Work search form (sample)
14	How do I file my weekly claim?	28	Work search form
15	Some things to know when filing your unemployment claim		

This publication is issued by the Oklahoma Employment Security Commission, as authorized by provisions of the Oklahoma Employment Security Act. The publication will be made available online. A copy has been deposited with the publication clearinghouse of the Department of Libraries.

FAQs about unemployment insurance

What is expected of me?

When you file for unemployment benefits you must:

- register for work with [OKJobMatch.com](https://www.okjobmatch.com)
- file your weekly claims
- attend all required groups and appointments you may be scheduled for
- perform two (2) work search efforts each week, and keep a log of your work search efforts

What if I live outside of Oklahoma?

If you live out of state, you must register for work in your resident state. Please read all information included in this book for additional information regarding the claims process.

How do I find a job?

You are required to register for employment services within seven (7) days of initially filing your claim. This can be accomplished by registering at [OKJobMatch.com](https://www.okjobmatch.com). This interactive job search tool is designed to help you connect with employers and their job openings.

You may also wish to access our services in one of the local Oklahoma Works - American Job Centers conveniently located throughout the state:
oklahoma.gov/oesc/job-seekers/oklahoma-works-locations

When will I receive my payment?

By law, the first payable (or allowable) week of the claim is considered to be a waiting period. Although you must still file your weekly claim (either by phone or online), you will not be paid for the waiting period week.

No benefits will be paid if there are insufficient wages to establish monetary eligibility, if there is an issue being investigated, or if you do not file your weekly claim. Once benefits have been approved and the waiting period week is done, payments are made within 2-3 days of the weekly claim being filed. Weekly claims are filed after the week ends but must be filed within fourteen (14) days of the week ending date. All weeks run Sunday through Saturday.

There is an 'issue' on my claim. What does that mean?

An "issue" on your claim, sometimes called a "stop," means that based on the way you answered a question, either on your initial claim, or on your weekly claim, further investigation is needed to determine if you are eligible for benefits. An issue or stop can also be added for failure to attend a required reemployment service session, or the failure to complete a required task.

You will be contacted if additional information is needed. An issue/stop on your claim will delay your claim and may result in a disqualification of benefits depending on the findings. In the meantime, you need to continue to file your weekly claims each week while the issue is pending. You may check the status of your claim at any time, by signing in to your account at ui.ok.gov.

How are payments made?

An Unemployment Insurance benefit debit card will be issued to you after the waiting period is served. It normally takes between 7–10 days to receive the card. Do not throw the debit card away. It is an important resource that you may need during the course of your claim. Keep the card for three (3) years.

You have two (2) options to receive unemployment insurance payments.

PREPAID DEBIT CARD

To receive payments to the debit card, you must activate the card by following the instructions sent with the card. For general information on prepaid accounts, visit cfpb.gov/prepaid.

DIRECT, NO-FEE TRANSFER FROM THE PREPAID DEBIT CARD INTO YOUR OWN U.S. BANKING ACCOUNT

To set up this recurring direct transfer, you must activate your card and then visit goprogram.com or call 1-866-320-8699 and use the automated system to enter your banking information.

How do I change my PIN number?

OESC does not have access to your PIN but can help you reset it. If you forget your number or want to change, we can reset your PIN so you can establish a new PIN. You can also change your PIN online. Contact our Unemployment Service Center or visit ui.ok.gov and sign into your account. Click on "Reset PIN" at the top of the page inside the My Account Box.

What do I need to do to have taxes taken out of my check?

Unemployment Insurance benefits are subject to federal and state income tax. If you choose to have taxes withheld, federal taxes of 10% and state taxes of 3% will be deducted from the gross amount of your payment each week. You must report unemployment benefits you receive when you file your income taxes. By January 31 of each year, the Oklahoma Employment Security Commission will send you a form 1099-G with the amount of benefits you received the prior year.

How and when do I file my weekly claim?

After you have filed your application for benefits, you must file weekly claims in order to receive benefits. The filing week begins on Sunday at 12:01 a.m. and end on Saturday at midnight. You cannot file a weekly claim until after the week is over. If you attempt to file before the week has ended, your claim will not be accepted.

Weekly claims can be filed online by signing into your account on ui.ok.gov.

OR by phone:

(405) 525-1500

(800) 522-8506 TTY/TDD Calls

What if I can't file my weekly claim?

Contact your nearest Oklahoma Works - American Job Center or the Unemployment Service Center during normal business hours if you encounter any problems when filing your weekly claim:

(405) 525-1500

(800) 522-8506 TTY/TDD Calls

Can I work part-time and still receive benefits?

To be considered part-time, you must work less than 32 hours per week. When filing you must report the amount of money you earned for each individual week, not just the weeks you were paid by your employer. This amount should be before any deductions are made. Earnings must be reported during the week you work, not when you actually receive the payment. Work is anything you do for wages, including self-employment, during the seven (7) days of the week you are claiming Unemployment Insurance benefits.

How do I change my address?

If you plan to change your address, you must report the change to the Unemployment Service Center prior to filing your weekly claim. Information required to change an address includes your name, social security number, old address, new address and the employer from whom you were separated when you filed your claim. You can go to ui.ok.gov and register or sign in to access your account information.

How do I file an appeal?

You can file an appeal in person, by mail, fax, telephone or email. Include your name, social security number, phone number, date of determination, section of law you are appealing and a detailed explanation of why you disagree with the decision. The mailing address, fax number, telephone number and email address will be listed on your determination.

REMEMBER!

Any questions regarding your Unemployment Insurance claim can be answered by calling one of the numbers listed on the Quick Reference & Contact page of this document or by visiting our website, oklahoma.gov/oesc

Services for Veterans

The U.S. Department of Labor provides grant funds to the State of Oklahoma to provide employment and training services to Veterans and eligible Covered Persons within all Department of Labor service programs. As a condition to receiving those funds, priority of service will be given to qualified Veterans and eligible Covered Persons when referring individuals to job openings, and in providing all Department of Labor funded employment and training programs/services.

Veterans and other Covered Persons are encouraged to identify themselves to staff when entering a workforce office. Disabled Veterans, Veterans with significant barriers to employment and other Covered Persons identified by the Secretary of Labor are eligible for specialized services and case management through Oklahoma Works offices.

To locate an Oklahoma Works - American Job Center near you, call us toll-free at (888) 980-WORK (9675) or (800) 722-0353 TDD, or visit oklahoma.gov/oesc/job-seekers/oklahoma-works-locations. Oklahoma Works office staff can further explain program details and benefits.

Reemployment services

OESC wants to help you get back to work as soon as possible. Our staff are skilled in matching the right candidate with the right job. We have many resources and tools to help you connect back to work. One of the tools we use is [OKJobMatch.com](https://www.okjobmatch.com) — The Right Match for Oklahoma Job Seekers. Check it out.

[OKJobMatch.com](https://www.okjobmatch.com) is an employment resource that matches job seekers with employers based on experience, education, skills, certifications and licenses. The website also allows Oklahoma's employers to search for talent in a single place. Its online resume-building tool helps applicants identify gaps in education, skill or credential requirements, and provide options for continuing education. [OKJobMatch.com](https://www.okjobmatch.com) uses your actual skills, education and experience to create a resume that takes the guesswork out of your job search. Completing the online resume process will help you generate the highest number of results, but you can also upload an existing resume for a revision to [OKJobMatch.com](https://www.okjobmatch.com) standards, or use it as-is.

[OKJobMatch.com](https://www.okjobmatch.com)'s powerful search engine scours more than 16,000 websites, matching you with the right job opportunities in all of Oklahoma's 77 counties and neighboring states — all at no cost to you. Go to [OKJobMatch.com](https://www.okjobmatch.com) to start your match today or visit your local Oklahoma Works office.

Our 27 Oklahoma Works - American Job Centers offer a variety of no-cost services to job seekers. In addition to job search assistance, your local Oklahoma Works office can help with resume writing, interview skills, and training assistance.

Other services include:

- Orientation to the information and services available
- Career Counseling & Consultation
- Pre-Employment Assessments
- Job Search and Placement Assistance
- Job Referrals
- Job Readiness Workshops
- Job Search Workshops
- Assessment of your needs and abilities
- Veteran Services
- Labor market information and statistics
- Follow-up services to help you obtain or maintain employment
- Federal bonding for certain job seekers
- Work Opportunity Tax Credit
- Basic skills training & skills upgrade, such as resume preparation, interviewing skills, math and computer skills
- Resume Software
- Typing, 10-Key and Microsoft Office Tutorials
- Phones, Fax Machines and Copiers
- Career Exploration - Information & Activities
- Job Seeker Networking and Support
- High-Speed Internet Access
- Assistance in establishing eligibility for other federal, state or local programs

Reemployment services

Unemployment Claimants may be required to participate in Reemployment Services provided through the Oklahoma Works offices. Our goal is to get claimants connected to work as soon as possible. If you receive notice to report to an Oklahoma Works office for Worker Profiling and Reemployment Services, sometimes referred to as RESEA, you are required to attend. Failure to attend may result in a denial of unemployment benefits. Some of the services you can expect to receive:

Oklahoma Works - American Job Center Orientation Session

You'll gain an overview of all available Reemployment Services provided through the Oklahoma Works offices and develop an employment plan to become reemployed.

Registration for Work

You are required to register for work online at [OKJobMatch.com](https://www.okjobmatch.com). This allows you to complete a resume and connect with employers. Our technology matches knowledge, skills and abilities with employers' requirements and qualifications for job openings. NOTE: Failure to register for work will result in denial of unemployment benefits.

Job Referrals and Job Placement

Claimants will be given job referrals based on skills, knowledge and abilities. Staff will match the claimants' qualifications with employers' requirements for the job opening. Staff may also contact employers on behalf of claimants to develop job opportunities.

Work Search Audits

Each week that you file for benefits you must search for work and keep a list of all your work search efforts. If you do not look for work, apply for work, or accept suitable work, you may not be eligible to receive benefits. OESC will randomly check your work search activities and ask for a copy of your work search list. Your efforts to find a job for each week in which you claim UI benefits will be reviewed. If you do not provide your work searches when asked, or if an employer disputes that you applied, you may be denied benefits. If you have already received benefits for one or more of the ineligible weeks, you will be required to pay back the money received.

Reemployment Needs Inventory

This service will quickly help to determine the claimant's readiness to return to work. The inventory evaluates job search activity, job search skills and confidence, and any barriers that may impact your chance of getting a job.

Employment Goal Determination and Labor Market Information

Staff will review your work history and collaborate with you to determine an employment goal, and discuss customized labor market information.

Job Search/Job Skills Workshops

Job search workshops include information on topics such as online job applications and resume writing as well as soft skills instruction including:

- Barriers to Employment
- Interview Skills and Etiquette
- Job Application
- Social Media
- Writing Resumes for Today's Employers

Follow Up Activities

After you receive the above services, staff will schedule a thirty (30) day follow-up meeting to review progress and discuss any barriers to employment and provide additional job referrals.

Training programs

What is Approved Training?

Approved training is a program that allows you to attend training or school while still drawing unemployment benefits. The requirement to perform work search efforts is replaced with a requirement to attend scheduled classes and make expected progress in those classes. Contact your local Oklahoma Works - American Job Center for more information regarding approved training.

Training must be approved by OESC. Training is considered “approved” only if the individual's prior work is no longer an in-demand occupation, and the training program selected is for an in-demand occupation. With the exception of TAA/TRA training (explained below), enrolling in an approved training program will not provide additional unemployment benefits.

Individuals attending school who are not in an approved training program must still search for work and be available to begin work when a job is offered.

DIFFERENT TYPES OF APPROVED TRAINING INCLUDE:

- Regular approved training: No monetary assistance is given to defray school costs, but work search requirements will be replaced with satisfactory attendance and progress in training.
- Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act (WIOA) approved training: In some instances state agencies may be able to offset portions of tuition.
- Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) and Trade Readjustment Allowances (TRA) approved training: TAA is a federally-funded program designed to provide additional training or schooling for individuals who lost their jobs due to increased imports from, or shifts in production to, foreign countries. TRA provides monetary assistance after normal state Unemployment Insurance benefits have expired. In order to receive TAA and TRA benefits, a group of workers must file a petition with the U.S. Department of Labor.

What is a TAA/TRA Claim?

Federal Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) pays benefits to workers who lose their jobs or their working hours are reduced as a result of increased imports. If you worked for an employer that has been impacted by TAA, you will receive notification of potential eligibility for the program. See oklahoma.gov/oesc/job-seekers/trade-adjustment-assistance-taa-workers-impacted-foreign-trade for more information.

Trade Readjustment Allowance (TRA) is essentially an extension of your weekly unemployment benefits. You must be enrolled in a TAA approved training; have completed a TAA approved or TAA approvable training program; or have received written certification waiving training requirements to be eligible for TRA. You must exhaust all rights to any state unemployment in order to be eligible for TRA. Once you have exhausted your basic TRA benefits you may request additional TRA weeks if you are still in TAA approved training.

You must inform the Oklahoma Employment Security Commission of all official school breaks. If you are on an official school break of 30 or less school days you may still be paid for TRA. You will need to continue to call in each week.

Unemployment insurance fraud

The Oklahoma Employment Security Commission is responsible for protecting the Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund. We have a full-time fraud detection unit to identify and recommend criminal prosecution for those who commit fraud.

Fraud, for Unemployment Insurance purposes, is knowingly making a false statement, misrepresenting a material fact, or withholding information to obtain unemployment benefits. Any statement you make in order to obtain unemployment benefits will be verified. If you are found to be overpaid, you will be required to repay benefits plus penalty and interest and you may be denied future benefits. All fraud cases are subject to possible criminal prosecution, fines and imprisonment.

EXAMPLES OF FRAUD INCLUDE:

- Failure to properly report a job separation
- Failure to properly report earnings
- Failure to report ALL earnings from any source
- Divulging your PIN number to anyone
- Allowing another person to file your weekly claim

PENALTIES FOR FRAUD INCLUDE:

- Jail sentence
- Denial of unemployment benefits for the week the overpayment is established and the next following 51 weeks for the first offense and 103 weeks for all subsequent offenses
- Repayment of the amount of benefits received as a direct result of fraud plus interest
- Criminal prosecution under federal or state law
- A 25% penalty on the amount of the original overpayment

Repaying Overpayments

If you have an overpayment, you can repay it in one lump sum or under an installment payment plan; however, OESC must approve such plans. If you are found to be overpaid due to your error, interest will be assessed at the rate of 1% per month on the unpaid amount until the entire amount is repaid. Interest will only accrue to the amount of the overpayment, for example, if you have a \$500 overpayment, your interest due will not exceed \$500.

Other Methods of Recovery of Overpayments Include:

- State income tax refund intercept
- Federal income tax refund intercept
- Bank account lien
- Garnishment of wages from future employer
- Property lien

Benefits will not be paid on a regular Unemployment Insurance claim until any outstanding overpayment has been recovered. OESC may recover an overpayment by deducting it from any benefits you may be eligible to receive on a current or future unemployment claim. If you are currently filing for and receiving Unemployment Insurance benefits, we will recoup your weekly claim amount and apply it to your established overpayment. You will not receive any unemployment benefits until the principal balance is completely recovered. You must pay accrued interest with a personal check or money order.

Unemployment insurance

What is Unemployment Insurance?

The intent of Unemployment Insurance is to pay benefits to eligible people during times of unemployment when suitable work is not available.

Unemployment Insurance is a temporary income intended to help workers who are unemployed through no fault of their own. It is an insurance paid by employers. Deductions ARE NOT made from your wages to pay Unemployment Insurance.

Benefits are payable to individuals who are:

- Unemployed through no fault of their own
- Able and available to look for and accept employment
- Monetarily eligible

MYTH

*Employees pay
UI tax*

FACT

*Liable employers
pay UI tax*

Monetary Determination

After you file an initial application for unemployment benefits, you will receive a Monetary Determination for Unemployment Benefits. This determination will show:

- The employers that paid unemployment taxes on your wages during the base period
- Your benefit year begins on Sunday of the week you file your initial claim and ends one year later
- Your weekly benefit amount (WBA)
- Your maximum benefit amount (MBA)
- Messages regarding your eligibility or overpayments on a prior claim

How are my WBA and MBA calculated?

Your Weekly Benefit Amount (WBA)

The amount you may receive weekly is one twenty-third (1/23) of the highest quarter of taxable wages in your base period not to exceed the maximum weekly benefit amount allowed by Oklahoma law.

Taxable wages are those wages during your base period that are subject to unemployment tax. This is a tax paid by your employer and is not taken from your paycheck.

If you are monetarily eligible, the weekly benefit amount will not be less than \$16.00 nor more than the maximum allowed by law. For 2021, the maximum WBA is capped at \$461.00. For example, if during your base period your highest calendar quarter of taxable wages was \$14,000, you would divide that by 23 which would be \$608.70. Since the maximum benefit amount allowed by law for 2021 is \$461, and \$608.70 exceeds that amount, your weekly benefit amount would be adjusted to \$461.

Your Maximum Benefit Amount (MBA)

State law establishes the maximum amount you may draw during your benefit year. Typically, individuals are able to receive benefits for up to twenty-six (26) weeks; although, in some cases this can vary.

Your Base Period is the twelve (12) month period consisting of the first four (4) of the last five (5) completed calendar quarters before the effective date of your claim. Once a monetarily eligible claim is established the base period cannot be changed. For base period purposes, quarters change after the first Sunday in the quarter.

1st quarter—January, February, March

2nd quarter—April, May, June

3rd Quarter—July, August, September

4th quarter—October, November, December

Example: If you filed your initial claim AFTER the first Sunday in April 2021 but BEFORE the first Sunday in July 2021, your base period would be from January 2020 through December 2020.

Monetary Determination for Unemployment Benefits				
Name <u>Mel Fishbaum</u>	SSN <u>123-45-6789</u>	Date Prepared <u>04-05-2021</u>		
Effective Date <u>04-04-2021</u>	Weekly Benefit Amount <u>\$304.00</u>	Maximum Benefit Amount <u>\$ 7904.00</u>		
Benefit Year Ending Date <u>04-03-2022</u>	Base Period <u>01-01-2020 Thru 12-31-2020</u>			
Employer Acct Number and Name	Mar-2020	June-2020	Sept-2020	Dec-2020
01-0000001 Poole's Fritter House	\$7000.00	\$7000.00	\$4100.00	
			* \$2900.00	* \$7000.00
Total Wages	\$7000.00	\$7000.00	\$7000.00	\$7000.00
* Denotes Non-taxable Wages. These wages are not used to calculate the weekly benefit amount				

These numbers are used for illustration purposes only and do not reflect a guaranteed amount.

How do I file my weekly claim?

After you have filed your application for benefits, you must file weekly claims to receive benefits. Each week begins on Sunday at 12:01 a.m. and ends on Saturday at midnight.

You cannot file a weekly claim until after the week is over. If you attempt to file before the week has ended, your claim will not be accepted.

Weekly Claims Can Be Filed Two Ways:

Online: ui.ok.gov

Phone: (405) 525-1500

THE ONLINE SYSTEM CAN BE USED TO:

- File a new unemployment claim or reopen an existing claim
- File your weekly claim
- Inquire about an existing unemployment claim
- View and print your 1099
- Visit the Oklahoma Employment Security Commission home page
- Change your address
- Change your PIN
- Change tax withholdings
- Find information regarding electronic payment options
- View non-monetary determinations
- View overpayment information
- File appeals

THE INTERACTIVE VOICE RESPONSE TELEPHONE SYSTEM CAN BE USED TO:

- File a new unemployment claim or reopen an existing claim
- File your weekly claim
- Inquire about an existing unemployment claim
- Inquire about amount of benefits reported to the IRS
- Find information on an existing overpayment
- Speak to an Unemployment Service Representative
- Get general information regarding unemployment benefits

BEFORE YOU FILE YOUR WEEKLY CLAIM, MAKE SURE YOU HAVE YOUR:

- Social Security Number
- Personal Identification Number (PIN)
- Information on any earnings and the number of hours you worked during the week (including vacation, holiday and severance pay)

HEADS UP!

When filing your weekly claim by phone, you must listen to the entire question before entering your response. If you try to enter your response before the system prompts you, it will start the question over!

Reminder: Be On Time

Weekly claims filed 15 or more calendar days after the week has ended are considered untimely and (in most cases) will not be paid.

Example questions when filing your weekly claim

If filing by phone, you will be given instructions on how to answer each question.

QUESTIONS MAY INCLUDE:

1. Oklahoma requires that you are able and available to work each week if employment is offered. Were you able and available for work during the week you are claiming?
 - a. *If yes, you will be prompted to enter hours worked and gross wages earned.*
2. You must report all work performed. Did you perform work this week for which you were or will be paid?
 - a. *If yes, you will be prompted to enter hours worked and gross wages earned.*
3. Did you receive or are you entitled to severance pay for the week?
4. Did you receive or are you entitled to vacation pay for the week?
 - a. *NOTE: Vacation pay is deductible if you have a return-to-work date.*
5. Are you entitled to holiday pay for the week you are claiming?
 - a. ***Note: (Holiday pay is deductible in the week in which the holiday falls.)*
6. Did you receive bonus pay for the week you are claiming?
 - a. *Note: bonus pay is deductible in the week in which it is received*
7. Has there been any change in the amount of retirement pay or pension previously reported?
8. Did you refuse work during the week you are claiming benefits?
9. Did you quit a job during the week you are claiming benefits?
10. Were you discharged or fired during the week you are claiming benefits?
11. Oklahoma requires that you search for work each week in accordance to the work search plan that you established at the time you filed your claim. Did you make the required number of work searches in accordance with your work search plan?
12. Realizing you are liable for any false statements made to receive unemployment, do you certify that you have answered these questions truthfully and accurately?

REMEMBER!

MAKING FALSE STATEMENTS IS FRAUD.

Issues that may affect your claim

YOU MAY BE MONETARILY ELIGIBLE FOR UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS AND STILL BE DENIED BENEFITS FOR OTHER REASONS

Any situation that may keep you from receiving benefits is called an “ISSUE” or a “STOP” on your claim. When this happens, OESC representatives will investigate the issue or stop, and may ask you to provide additional information regarding the situation before a decision can be made on your unemployment claim.

Some possibilities include:

Discharged or Fired Due to Misconduct:

You *may* be eligible for payment if you were discharged or fired from your job. An investigation of your job separation by OESC will determine whether your discharge was due to misconduct. If your job separation was due to misconduct, benefits will be denied. Misconduct shall include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Any intentional act or omission by an employee which constitutes a material or substantial breach of the employee’s job duties or responsibilities or obligations pursuant to his or her employment or contract of employment;
- Unapproved or excessive absenteeism or tardiness;
- Indifference to, breach of, or neglect of the duties required which result in a material or substantial breach of the employee’s job duties or responsibilities;
- Actions or omissions that place in jeopardy the health, life, or property of self or others;
- Dishonesty;
- Wrongdoing;
- Violation of a law; or
- A violation of a policy or rule enacted to ensure orderly and proper job performance or the safety of self or others.

Quitting Your Job:

You have the right to leave a job for any reason at any time, but the circumstances of the separation will determine if and when you will qualify for benefits. If you quit your job you will have to prove that your job separation was for good cause.

GOOD CAUSE MAY INCLUDE:

- A job working condition that has changed to such a degree that it was harmful, detrimental, or adverse to the persons health, safety, or morals, that leaving the work was justified.
- Substantially unfair treatment or the employer was creating difficult working conditions
- Separation under some collective bargaining agreements
- Not being paid for work performed

The burden of proof, when you quit, falls upon you as the claimant. You will have to offer evidence of the reason and show that you tried to correct the problem with your employer before quitting. One person’s word versus the other person’s word is not likely to prove good cause to quit. Quitting for personal reasons is not considered good cause connected to the work unless the separation is due to compelling family circumstances.

COMPELLING FAMILY CIRCUMSTANCES:

If you had to quit due to a medical condition or to care for someone in your immediate family, you may be eligible depending on the circumstances. However, you must be able to work and available to seek and accept work while filing your unemployment claim. You must also be willing to accept any suitable job offers.

- You or a family member has a medically documented illness that prevented you from working, but you are now able to work.
- You had to quit to move with your spouse who obtained a new job more than 50 miles away or was transferred.
- You were separated from employment due to domestic violence or abuse.

Other Reasons You May Be Disqualified Include:

- Failing to participate in required reemployment services (See page 9)
- Failing to search for or accept work
- Refusing a job offer for suitable work or refuse a referral to a suitable job
- Being unavailable to seek and accept work
- Not being a U.S. citizen and not authorized to work in the U.S.
- If you have limited the wages, hours, days or areas of a job you will accept
- If you were employed by an educational institution (certain conditions apply)
- If you are self-employed
- If your gross earnings, deductible severance payments, deductible vacation payments, or deductible bonus payments are \$100 greater than your weekly benefit amount.
- If your deductible retirement pay is greater than your weekly benefit amount.
- If you work full-time
- If you received bonuses
- If you are a union member involved in a strike

***Note: You must be able and available to seek and accept work in keeping with your past work experience and education. If you are going to school while filing for unemployment benefits, you must still meet this requirement. Under certain conditions, if you get accepted into approved training in coordination with an approval process at an Oklahoma Works office, then your work searches can be waived (see page 10). Work searches can only be waived upon receiving this specific approval. Contact your local Oklahoma Works office for more information.**

Working While Receiving Benefits:

Any employment (full-time, part-time, temporary, short term, volunteer, or cash-in-hand such as mowing lawns and babysitting) MUST be reported when you are filing for unemployment benefits.

- You may be entitled to a reduced amount of Unemployment Insurance benefits while you are working.
- You are still considered “unemployed” any week that you perform no services and are paid no wages or any week that you work less than full-time and your earnings are less than your weekly benefit amount plus one-hundred dollars (\$100.00).
- Full-time work is defined as thirty-two (32) or more hours of work per week. Remember “weeks” begin at 12:01 a.m. on Sunday and end at midnight on Saturday.
- You must report your gross earnings before any deductions were made for each week, whether or not you were paid during that same week.
- Earnings must be reported during the week you earn them, not when you actually receive the payment.

REMEMBER! You are responsible for the answers you provide and can be penalized under the law for withholding or willfully giving incorrect information.

Qualifying for benefits

In Order to Qualify for Benefits You Must:

BE MONETARILY QUALIFIED

To be monetarily qualified you must have earned a minimum of \$1,500 during your base period AND have total wages of one and one-half times your high quarter.

BE UNEMPLOYED THROUGH NO FAULT OF YOUR OWN

In order to qualify for benefits, you must have lost your job through no fault of your own; for example, a layoff or reduction in hours or pay not related to your performance.

BE ABLE, AVAILABLE, AND ACTIVELY SEEKING WORK

To qualify for benefits, you must be able and available for work. You must also be actively seeking work and documenting your work search efforts.

BE REGISTERED FOR WORK IN [OKJOBMATCH.COM](https://okjobmatch.com)

To qualify for benefits, you must be registered in [OKJobMatch.com](https://okjobmatch.com)

Work Search Requirements

To receive unemployment benefits, you are required to:

- Perform a minimum of two (2) work search efforts during each week benefits are being claimed.
- Keep track of your work searches using the work search log in the back of this guide.
- Work search efforts must include a minimum of two (2) different employers each week to meet the minimum work search requirement. Work searches cannot be repeated with the same employer until four (4) weeks have passed. Job placement agencies can be utilized in back to back weeks.
- If direct contacts are made, they should be made with an individual in the company who has hiring authority.
- Work searches should be for work you are willing and qualified to do, pay that you are willing to accept, and in the area that you are willing to work.
- All work search efforts are subject to verification in the event you are selected for an audit. Failure to make the required number of work searches each week could result in a denial of benefits and possible overpayment.
- Union members that have a hiring hall must contact the hiring hall each week. If you do not have a hiring hall, you must make the required number of work searches each week.

How do I receive my payments?

The Oklahoma Electronic Payment Program is handled by an outside company, Conduent. All eligible individuals will be mailed a debit card after the waiting period is served. Unemployment payments will be issued to this debit card, but you may elect to have funds transferred to your personal bank after you have received and activated this card.



FOR PAYMENT INQUIRIES OR TO SET UP DIRECT DEPOSIT,
CONTACT CONDUENT AT:

- (866) 320-8699
- goprogram.com

The debit card is valid for three (3) years. However, direct deposit will be deactivated for all bank accounts that have had no deposits in the last 6 months (180 days). If you want to receive your current benefit payments by direct deposit, you MUST contact Conduent to update your banking information; otherwise you will receive your payments via debit card. Additionally, if you have changed banks, you need to submit new direct deposit information to Conduent.

REMEMBER: DON'T SHARE YOUR PIN WITH ANYONE!

Maintaining your eligibility

To maintain your eligibility for benefits you must:

- File your weekly claim each week
- Actively seek work and record your work searches
- Be able and available to seek and accept work
- Report ANY and ALL wages, including commission, bonuses, cash or anything of value the week you earn it, NOT the week you are paid. This amount should be before any deductions are made.

You must notify OESC if:

- You refused a job referral from a local Oklahoma Works office
- You refused a job offer
- You are self-employed or working on commission, even if you are not being paid
- You are enrolled in or plan to enroll in school or training
- For any reason you are not able and available to seek and accept employment
- You change your address or telephone number. The post office will NOT forward government mail.
- You need instructions on how to continue filing for benefits if you are moving to another state
- You make an error while filing your weekly claim

What if I can't return to my previous job or career?

There are specialists at your local Oklahoma Works who will customize an individual service plan for you which includes employment goals, plans to overcome barriers, job search workshops and job referrals. You MUST attend a follow-up appointment within thirty (30) days of the completion of required initial RESEA.

Notification of change of address:

You must keep the Oklahoma Employment Security Commission (OESC) informed of your current mailing address at all times. You MUST inform OESC in writing, by telephone, or online of any changes to your address. You may be mailed important documents and/or instructions to follow that, if action is not taken, might delay your claim or cause a denial of benefits.

NOTE: OESC may reach out to you at times regarding your benefits. If you fail to respond to any correspondence, you could experience delays in receiving benefits, or even be denied benefits.

What do I do when I return to work?

What do I do when I return to work?

First of all, congratulations! Your next step will depend on when you return to work (what day of the week) and whether you return to full-time (32 or more hours per week) or part-time (less than 32 hours) work.

What do I do when I return to work full-time?

- Simply stop filing for unemployment benefits the week you return to full-time work.
- Report your new job to OESC.
- Retain your work search efforts for at least two (2) years.

What if I return to work part-time (less than 32 hours per week)?

People who accept part-time employment are allowed to continue filing for unemployment benefits; However, you must:

- Report earnings (before any deductions) during the week they are earned, not the week you are paid.
- Continue to search for full-time work.
- Continue to attend all required groups and workshops.

NOTE: If you are unwilling or unable to continue to search for full-time work or attend all required groups and workshops you should stop filing for benefits.

What if I start a full-time job in the middle of the week?

- If you work less than 32 hours the first week of employment you may still file for benefits for that week only.
- You must report your hours worked and gross earnings for that week when you file your weekly claim and then stop filing weekly claims.
- Failure to report your hours and earnings is considered fraud and will be subject to the fraud penalties.

What if my new job ends?

You may reestablish your unemployment claim by contacting OESC and providing the name, address and phone number of the job that just ended, along with the reason for separation. A notification will be sent to that employer.

A determination will be made on whether you are eligible to continue drawing unemployment benefits.

NOTE: Unemployment claims are open for one year. Once you reach the end of your benefit year, you will be required to file a new claim, even if you have remaining benefits on your previous claim. The new claim will require that you serve a new waiting period, and may result in new weekly and maximum benefit amounts.

Unemployment Insurance is payable only when you are unemployed

Once you begin working again, even if you do not receive your first paycheck for a few weeks, you must stop filing for weekly benefits. If you continue to file and do not report your earnings (remember, they are reported the week they are earned, not the week paid) you are committing fraud and will be subject to the fraud penalties.

Unemployment Insurance is payable only when you are unemployed

Once you begin working again, even if you do not receive your first paycheck for a few weeks, you must stop filing for weekly benefits. If you have not resumed full-time work, and are working part-time instead, you must report any and all wages the week they are earned. If you continue to file and either do not report your earnings or have returned to work full-time, you are committing fraud and will be subject to the fraud penalties.

One of the main causes of overpayments is an individual's failure to stop filing after returning to work.

Remember!

If you accept employment and your start date is within three (3) weeks or less, you may continue to file your weekly claims until the week you begin work. You will not have to search for work during this time period; however, you must notify OESC of the scheduled date to begin work.

Reopening your claim

If you quit filing weekly claims for three weeks or more, your claim will become inactive. You can reactivate your claim online by signing into your account at ui.ok.gov or call the Unemployment Service Center at (405) 525-1500.

Fraud

The Oklahoma Employment Security Commission has a Fraud Investigation Unit that obtains information from the State and Federal New Hire Directories. Employers are required to report new hires and former employees who have returned to work. The Commission cross matches those reports against our active claim files to determine if someone returned to work and continued to file for unemployment benefits. If a match is found an investigation is done to determine why the individual continued to file. If it is determined that the individual should not have filed, an overpayment will be established for each week in which benefits were improperly claimed and paid. Remember, failure to report earnings during the week in which they are earned may be considered fraud. Fraudulent overpayments accrue interest, have a 25% penalty, could result in incarceration and will prevent future claims filing for one to two years, depending on the particular case.

MAIN RESOURCES FOR RECOUPING OVERPAYMENTS INCLUDE:

- State and federal tax return intercepts
- Wage garnishments
- Lottery winnings
- Liens against property; and
- Offsets of weekly benefit amounts

Keep track of your hours and earnings using our earnings log in the back of this guide. You will need to report this information when you make your weekly claim.

Additionally, you must report when you no longer work for an employer.

Report your earnings during the week in which they are earned, not the week you are paid. Failure to report earnings is considered fraud against the State of Oklahoma. Penalties for fraud include having to pay back all money obtained through fraudulent means, paying interest of 1% on the outstanding balance and a penalty of twenty-five percent (25%) of the amount of the original overpayment.

What if I don't qualify?

When you have an issue or stop on your claim, it can take some time for OESC to thoroughly investigate and determine whether you qualify. We must notify your last employer and investigate your job separation and any other issues. When the investigation is complete, OESC will mail you a determination on each issue telling you whether or not you are approved for benefits. If you disagree, you can appeal the decision.

Appealing a notice of determination

Any time a determination of eligibility is made on your claim, you will receive a determination in the mail that will explain if you are allowed or disallowed benefits. If you do not understand the determination, or have questions regarding the appeal process, contact the Unemployment Service Center at (405) 525-1500. You may appeal any Notice of Determination which denied benefits. Other interested parties, such as your employer may also have appeal rights.

Parties have ten (10) calendar days from the mail date of the determination to appeal the determination.

If the tenth (10) day falls on a weekend or state holiday, the deadline will be the following business day. If you are unable to file an appeal within ten (10) days, you must provide a detailed explanation as to why you are filing untimely. The Appeal Tribunal will determine if good cause for filing an untimely appeal is established before a hearing is held on the issue being appealed.

If it is determined that you have been overpaid, you will have twenty (20) days after the date of the mailing of the notice to file an appeal with the Appeal Tribunal. If the overpayment is a result of a determination, you must appeal both the overpayment and the determination.

You can file an appeal in person, by mail, fax, telephone or email. In your appeal include:

- your name
- social security number
- phone number,
- date of determination
- section of law you are appealing
(found on the determination)
- a detailed explanation of why you disagree with the decision.

NOTE: The mailing address, fax number, telephone number and email address will be listed on the Notice of Determination.

Once an appeal is filed, parties will be mailed an appeal packet with copies of all pertinent claim information. After your hearing has been set, you will then be mailed a notice of hearing. The notice will indicate what action is required for you to participate in the hearing. It is important for you to participate in the hearing since the decision on your claim will be based on information given at the hearing.

Failure to participate in the appeals hearing may result in a denial of benefits!

If witnesses are needed to help present your case, you must arrange for them to participate. Information about subpoena of records or individuals will be included in the appeal packet.

Protecting your rights while appealing a determination

Know Your Rights

You must continue filing your weekly claims while you are in the appeal process!

- If you are found eligible for benefits, you will only be paid for weeks you filed a weekly claim. Any weeks without a weekly claim will not be paid.
- If you fail to appear for your scheduled hearing, you must contact the Appeal Tribunal within ten (10) days after the mailing of the Appeal Tribunal's Order of Decision if you would like to reopen your appeal.
- Please note, your employer has the same appeal rights as you.
- If your employer appeals the decision, the appeal does not stop your benefits. However, if the employer wins the appeal, you will be considered overpaid for any benefits you received.
- It is important that you participate in the hearing on the employer's appeal so you may present your side of the case.

Your next step: Board of Review appeal

If the Appeal Tribunal determines you are NOT eligible for benefits you may appeal that decision to the Board of Review.

- Your appeal must be filed within ten (10) calendar days from the mail date of the Appeal Tribunal decision.
- If you file the appeal late, you must explain why you are filing untimely.
- The Board of Review may affirm, modify, reverse or remand any decision of the Appeal Tribunal. The hearing tape and decision are reviewed to ensure the evidence and UI law supports the Appeal Tribunal decision.
- You will be notified in writing of the Board's decision.
- The Board of Review's mailing address and fax number will be listed on the Appeal Tribunal decision.
- The Board of Review decision shall be final unless within thirty (30) days of the mailing of the decision either party appeals the decision to district court.
- If you have any questions, contact the Board of Review at (405) 962-7570.

Oklahoma Works - American Job Center locations

Oklahoma Works - American Job Centers are conveniently located throughout the state at the locations below. Contact information for each office can be found at oklahoma.gov/oesc/job-seekers/oklahoma-works-locations

Ada	Enid	Oklahoma City	Shawnee
Altus	Guymon	Okmulgee	Stillwater
Ardmore	Idabel	Ponca City	Tahlequah
Bartlesville	Lawton	Poteau	Tulsa
Chickasha	McAlester	Pryor	Weatherford
Duncan	Miami	Sapulpa	Woodward
Durant	Muskogee	Seminole	



Important reminders!

Reemployment Services at OESC are responsible for administering Labor Exchange programs and services to employers and job seekers through local Oklahoma Works - American Job Centers strategically located throughout the state. Our mission is to provide a smooth transition to self-sufficiency and economic stability for all Oklahoma citizens.

To locate your nearest Oklahoma Works - American Job Center, visit: oklahoma.gov/oesc/job-seekers/oklahoma-works-locations

REGISTER FOR WORK

You are required to register for work within seven (7) days of filing your unemployment claim. Do this either online or by going to your local Oklahoma Works office for assistance. Go to OKJobMatch.com and click on "Create a Job Seeker Account" to register for work by creating an account and completing your resume. Failure to register may cause a delay or denial of your claim.

NOTE: YOUR CLAIM WILL BECOME INACTIVE IF YOU QUIT FILING FOR THREE CONSECUTIVE WEEKS.

RECEIVING YOUR DEBIT CARD

Unemployment Insurance benefits debit cards will be issued to you at the time the waiting period processes. It normally takes between 7-10 business days to receive the card after it has been issued. If you have not received your debit card by the 10th business day, please contact Conduent toll-free at (866) 320-8699 to inquire about your debit card.

REPORT ALL EARNINGS

You must report earnings during the week in which they are earned, not the week you are paid. Failure to report earnings is considered fraud against the State of Oklahoma. Penalties for fraud include having to pay back all money obtained through fraudulent means, paying interest of 1% on the outstanding balance and a penalty of twenty-five percent (25%) of the amount of the original overpayment.

CHANGE YOUR ADDRESS

If you move you **MUST** change your address by contacting our Unemployment Service Center or a local Oklahoma Works office! Government mail will not be forwarded by the Post Office and you will miss important information regarding your claim.

RETAIN WORK SEARCH EFFORTS

Be sure to keep a record of your work searches for at least two (2) years. Your claim could be audited and you will be required to provide documentation of work searches.

CONFIDENTIALITY OF RECORDS

Your social security number is required to file an unemployment claim. OESC has an agreement with various state and federal agencies to share data. Please be advised that when you file your claim for unemployment benefits, we may request information from other agencies as well as share common data we have on file.

OKLAHOMA EMPLOYMENT SECURITY COMMISSION
WORK SEARCH FORM

Name: John Smith - Example						
Claim Week (Sun-Sat)	Date	Employer Information (include address/location or website)	Position or Type of Work Applied for	Method of Application	Results	
1/3/21 - 1/9/21	1/5/21	Fishbaum's Fritter House 3242 Fryer Ln, Norman, OK	Head Cook	emailed	Will call if needed - not hired	
1/3/21 - 1/9/21	1/7/21	Emmett's Auto 1640 Riverside Dr, OKC, OK	Mechanic	In-person	not hiring	
1/10/21 to 1/16/21	1/12/21	Bank of Metropolis 1938 Illinois Ave, Guymon, OK	bank teller	online	Interviewed 1/14/21 - no offer	
1/10/21 to 1/16/21	1/14/21	Veterans Affairs - OKC www.usajobs.gov	Maintenance Technician II	online	Waiting - no response	
1/17/21 - 1/23/21	1/19/21	Mc-Fil-A 742 Evergreen Terrace, Tahlequah, OK	manager	Job Fair at OK Works office	Interviewed on the spot - no offer	
1/17/21 - 1/23/21	1/21/21	Restaurants To-Go www.restaurantstogo.com	work from home agent	online	no response	
1/24/21 to 1/30/21	1/26/21	Staffing Solutions 4132 Wurking Ave, Lawton, OK	anything maintenance	phone	interviewed 1/27/21 - will call if offered	
1/24/21 to 1/30/21	1/28/21	Tardis Tasty Treats 76 Totter's Ln, McAlester, OK	Decorator	Facebook jobs	phone interview 1/30/21 and again 1/31/21 - no offer yet but promising	
1/31/21 - 2/6/21	2/2/21	Resume Workshop Oklahoma Works office in Muskogee, OK			Built a better resume	
1/31/21 - 2/6/21	2/4/21	Watson Pest Detection 221B Baker St, Enid, OK	Office assistant	In-person	Met owner at networking event and gave my resume. He called 2/5 and hired me.	

In accordance with the [Rules for the Administration of the Oklahoma Employment Security Act](#), all individuals filing for unemployment must perform a minimum of two (2) work searches each week that benefits are claimed, unless they meet the criteria of an exempted group. Please record all efforts on this form and retain for three (3) years for audit purposes. Please note that proof of applications may be required.

OES-622 (Rev. 1-21)

For additional copies of the Work Search Form OES-622 go to oklahoma.gov/oesc.

**OKLAHOMA EMPLOYMENT SECURITY COMMISSION
WORK SEARCH FORM**

Name:					
Claim Week (Sun-Sat)	Date	Employer Information (include address/location or website)	Position or Type of Work Applied for	Method of Application	Results

In accordance with the [Rules for the Administration of the Oklahoma Employment Security Act](#), all individuals filing for unemployment must perform a minimum of two (2) work searches each week that benefits are claimed, unless they meet the criteria of an exempted group. Please record all efforts on this form and retain for three (3) years for audit purposes. Please note that proof of applications may be required.